

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-12

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ADP-00 NEAE-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 INRE-00

USIE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-15 AID-20

ACDA-19 IO-13 RSR-01 /144 W
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O R 231125Z JUL 73

FM AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5864

INFO AMEMBASSY COLOMBO

AMEMBASSY DACCA

AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

AMEMBASSY KABUL

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

C O N F I D E N T I A L KATHMANDU 3155

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, NP, AF

SUBJECT: AFGAN COUP: GON INTEREST IN US VIEWS: REQUEST FOR
INFO/ASSESSMENT

SUMMARY: GON INTEREST IN AFGHAN COUP IS INTENSE, AND
BASED PRIMARILY ON THREE CONSIDERATIONS: (A) WHETHER TO
RECOGNIZE DAUD REGIME (NEPAL CONSIDERS AFGHANISTAN
"NEIGHBORING COUNTRY" BUT DOESN'T WANT TO RUSH IN UNTIL
IT KNOWS FACTS); (B) QUESTION WHETHER USSR AND PERHAPS
INDIA HELPED INSTIGATE COUP (SEEN AS DIRECTLY RELEVANT TO
NEPAL'S OWN PARAMOUNT SECURITY CONCERNS); AND (C) ROYAL
SYMPATHY AND CONCERN AT OUSTER OF ONE OF FEW MONARCHIES
LEFT IN ASIA.

NEPALESE OFFICIALS HIGH AND LOW HAVE BEEN QUIZZING ME
AND OTHER MISSION OFFICERS EVER SINCE DAUD COUP AS TO
WHAT IS GOING ON AND WHY. JOINT SECRETARY IN FOREIGN
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MINISTRY CALLED ME IN THIS MORNING TO DISCUSS SITUATION

INFORMALLY AND INDICATED GON HAS NO HARD INFORMATION YET ON WHICH IT BELIEVES IT CAN FORM JUDGEMENTS. UNDER CIRCUMSTANCES, BELIEVE IT WOULD BE IN U.S. INTEREST FOR ME TO CONVEY REASONABLY CANDID ASSESSMENT OF CURRENT SITUATION IN AFGHANISTAN. I WOULD VERY MUCH APPRECIATE RECEIVING SOME TALKING POINTS, IF POSSIBLE BY TOMORROW WHEN I HAVE AN APPOINTMENT TO SEE FOREIGN MINISTER. END SUMMARY.

1. INITIAL REACTION HERE TO NEWS OF DAUD COUP IN AFGHANISTAN, WAS ONE OF SHOCK AT TERMINATION OF ONE OF ASIA'S FEW REMAINING MONARCHIES. PALACE CONCERN EVIDENCED BY DIMOUT OF COVERAGE IN LOCAL PRESS, WHICH IS, UNDER ORDERS, REPORTING EVENTS ONLY BRIEFLY AND IN TERMS OF CHANGE OF PRIME MINISTERS, DELETING ANY REFERENCE TO ESTABLISHMENT OF REPUBLIC, DESPITE FACT LOCAL PUBLIC CONTINUES HAVE ACCESS TO INDIAN PRESS WHICH HAS BEEN GIVING FRONT-PAGE DAILY COVERAGE TO DEVELOPMENTS AND IS SUFFERING NO SIMILAR INHIBITIONS ABOUT REPORTING FALL OF MONARCHY.

2. EVERY GON OFFICIAL I HAVE HAD OCCASION TO TALK TO SINCE COUP TOOK PLACE HAS QUIZZED ME AS TO USG VIEWS REGARDING COUP. FONMIN JOINT SECRETARY SHARDUL RANA ASKED ME TO DROP BY OFFICE THIS MORNING FOR INFORMAL DISCUSSION OF SUBJECT. RANA SAID GON IS IN A QUANDARY AT THIS POINT BECAUSE ITS AMBASSADOR TO AFGHANISTAN IS RESIDENT IN NEW DELHI AND IT HAS SO FAR BEEN UNABLE TO OBTAIN ANY HARD INFORMATION AS TO SITUATION ON GROUND WHICH WOULD HELP IT IN DECIDING RECOGNITION ISSUE. RANA NOTED GON CONSIDERS AFGHANISTAN "NEIGHBORING COUNTRY" AND BELIEVES THAT DEVELOPMENTS THERE COULD AFFECT REGION AS A WHOLE. ON RECOGNITION, HE INDICATED NEPAL WOULD HAVE TO FACE REALITIES, BUT BEFORE DECIDING ON NEXT STEPS WOULD LIKE TO KNOW WHAT THOSE REALITIES WERE. HE THEN ZEROED IN ON FACT THAT USSR AND INDIA AMONG FIRST TO RECOGNIZE NEW AFGHAN REGIME AND WONDERED WHETHER USSR AND PERHAPS INDIA HAD PLAYED ROLE IN ENCOURAGING DAUD TO STAGE COUP. HE WAS EVEN MORE CONCERNED THAT THIS MIGHT SIGNAL MORE ACTIVE SOVIET AND INDIAN POLICIES IN REGION AS A WHOLE, WHICH COULD HAVE HIGHLY ADVERSE CONSEQUENCES FOR NEPAL. ALTHOUGH HE INSISTED THAT HIS CONFIDENTIAL

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CONVERSATION WITH ME WAS INFORMAL AND ESSENTIALLY PERSONAL, HE INDICATED HE WOULD WELCOME ANY ASSESSMENT I MIGHT GIVE HIM IN FUTURE OF NATURE OF CIRCUMSTANCES SURROUNDING COUP AND CURRENT OUTLOOK.

3. AS DEPSEC RUSH AND ASSISTANT SECRETARY SISCO WELL AWARE FROM THEIR VISIT HERE LAST APRIL, ABIDING GON FEAR IS THAT INDIA, ENCOURAGED BY USSR, WILL EMBARK UPON

MORE FORCEFUL AND ASSERTIVE POLICIES TOWARDS ITS SMALLER NEIGHBORS. THUS ANY SIGN OF INDIAN OR INDO-SOVIET ACTIVISM OR ADVENTURISM IN AREA, AS WITH EAST PAKISTAN IN 1971 AND WITH SIKKIM EARLIER THIS YEAR, AROUSES DEEPP CONCERN. SUCH CONCERN NATURALLY LEADS NEPALESE OFFICIALS INCREASINGLY TO LOOK TO U.S. AS WELL-INFORMED AND DISINTERESTED FRIEND CAPABLE OF PROVIDING USEFUL COUNSEL.

4. I BELIEVE U.S. INTERESTS IN NEPAL AND AREA CALL FOR US TO BE REASONABLY RESPONSIVE TO NEPALESE DESIRE FOR USG ASSESSMENT OF AFGHAN SITUATION. I THEREFORE REQUEST FOLLOWING:

A. APPROPRIATE ADDRESSEES PLEASE INCLUDE KATHMANDU HENCEFORTH ON SUCH CABLE TRAFFIC AS INVOLVES GENERAL ANALYSIS OF AFGHAN SITUATION AND ASSESSMENT OF ITS IMPLICATIONS.

B. DEPT PLEASE PROVIDE ME WITH TALKING POINTS FOR PRESENTATION TO GON, HOPEFULLY ONES THAT WILL CONVEY FAIRLY CANDID CLASSIFIED U.S. ASSESSMENT OF CURRENT STATE OF AFFAIRS IN AFGHANISTAN INCLUDING EXTENT OF DAUD'S CONTROL, NATURE OF SOVIET AND INDIAN INTERETS AS WE SEE THEM, AND ANY OTHER FACTORS PERTINENT TO OUR NEEDS HERE AS SUGGESTED BY FOREGOING.

5. I HAVE JUST BEEN INFORMED I HAVE APPOINTMENT WITH FOREIGN MINISTER TOMORROW MORNING, JULY 24. I HAD PREVIOUSLY REQUESTED APPOINTMENT FOR ROUTINE COURTESY CALL IN CONNECTION INSTALLATION NEW CABINET AND HAD BEEN GIVEN TO UNDERSTAND IT WOULD TAKE ABOUT ANOTHER WEEK FOR APPOINTMENT TO COME THROUGH. FACT OF IT COMING THROUGH AT THIS TIME SUGGESTS CONTINUING HIGH-LEVEL INTEREST IN ELICITING U.S. VIEWS ON AFGHAN SITUATION. WOULD THERE-
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FORE APPRECIATE WHATEVER INTERIM GUIDANCE DEPARTMENT CAN PROVIDE TODAY. (INCIDENTALLY, MY APPOINTMENT FOR COURTESY CALL ON NEW PRIME MINISTER RIJAL HAS BEEN SET FOR THURSDAY MORNING, JULY 26.)
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